



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

REGION 5

77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD

CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

**MAY 25 2010**

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

E-19J

Marilee Houtler, Project Leader  
Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest  
Lakewood-Laona Ranger District  
15085 State Road 32  
Lakewood, Wisconsin 54138

Re: Honey Creek-Padus Project Final Environmental Impact Statement, Lakewood-Laona  
Ranger District, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Forest County, Wisconsin.  
CEQ No. 20100197

Dear Ms. Houtler:

In accordance with Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the U.S. Forest Service's (FS) above-referenced Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

The FEIS documents the analysis of the No-Action alternative (Alternative 1) and three action alternatives [Alternative 2, Alternative 3 (Aspen Regeneration Emphasis), and Alternative 4 (Increased Buffer Alternative)]. Alternative 4 was developed since the DEIS to respond to concerns identified during the DEIS comment period. The FEIS identifies all action alternatives would move the aspen classes toward the desired future conditions in the forest plan. Also, all action alternatives would reduce the road density for the project, moving it toward desired future conditions. The FEIS identifies Alternative 3 as the Agency Preferred Alternative.

The EPA assigned a rating of "Lack of Objections" to the Draft EIS (DEIS) in our November 9, 2009 letter. Based on our review of the FEIS, we maintain our lack of objections. By implementing forest plan standards and guidelines as well as project design features, the proposed project is not expected to result in significant impacts.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this project. Please send me a copy of the Record of Decision (ROD) when it is available. If you have any questions, please contact Virginia Laszewski of my staff at (312) 886-7501 or at [laszewski.virginia@epa.gov](mailto:laszewski.virginia@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Kenneth A. Westlake", is positioned above the typed name.

Kenneth A. Westlake  
Chief, NEPA Implementation Section  
Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance